

**City of Greensboro Planning Department  
Generalized Future Land Use Map Plan Amendment  
January 19, 2005 Public Hearing**

*The information provided in this staff report has been included for the purpose of reviewing proposed Future Land Use Map Amendments. In considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the City shall be guided by factors that include, but are not limited to: the need for the proposed change; the effect of the proposed change on the need for city services and facilities; the implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the plan; and unforeseen circumstances or the emergence of new information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3). Plan Amendments are heard by the Planning Board, and recommended to the City Council for final action.*

**Case Number:** CP-04-08

**Request:** To amend the Generalized Future Land Use map (Figure 4-2) of the Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan for properties roughly bounded by (but not all inclusive), East Washington Street to the south, South Dudley Street to the west, the railroad tracks to the north, and Gant Street to the east **from the Low Residential Land Use Classification to the Mixed Use Residential Land Use Classification.** (see attached map)

**Location:** East Washington Street/South Dudley Street/railroad tracks/  
Gant Street

**Size:** 70.24 acres

**Existing Land Use:** Mix of apartments, single-family, duplexes, industrial, churches,  
community center, office

**CONNECTIONS 2025 LAND USE CLASSIFICATION**

**Existing: Low Residential (3 to 5 dwelling units per gross acre)**

This category includes the City's predominantly single-family neighborhoods as well as other compatible housing types that can be accommodated within this density range. Although there are some existing residential areas in the City developed on lots greater than 1/3 acre, future residential developments and "conventional" subdivisions should generally maintain a gross density of no less than three dwellings per acre, except where environmental constraints (e.g., the Watershed Critical Area) prevent such densities from being achieved. Compact developments that include clustered, small lots with substantial retained open space are encouraged.

### **Proposed: Mixed Use Residential**

This designation applies to neighborhoods or districts where the predominant use is residential and where substantial, compatible local-serving nonresidential uses may be introduced. Such use mixes are typically found in older, in-town neighborhoods that accommodate "corner stores" and other local services, as well as in newly developed traditional neighborhood developments (TNDs). This district is also applied in areas suited to a diverse mix of housing types and densities. Ensuring that buildings are of the appropriate scale and intensity is critical.

## **CONNECTIONS 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

*The following policies are applicable in this case:*

### **REINVESTMENT AREAS**

Reinvestment areas are neighborhoods and districts within Greensboro's urban areas that would most benefit from actions to promote compatible infill development and other forms of investment and reinvestment.

### **REINVESTMENT CORRIDORS**

Reinvestment corridors are older commercial corridors that would benefit from significant public and private investment to enhance their economic viability and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods.

### **REINVESTMENT/INFILL**

Goal: Promote sound investment in Greensboro's urban areas, including Center City, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods

### **HOUSING AND NEIGHBORHOODS**

Goal: Meet the needs of present and future Greensboro citizens for a choice of decent, affordable housing in stable, livable neighborhoods that offer security, quality of life, and the necessary array of services and facilities.

### **Policies**

6A.4 Implement measures to protect Greensboro's neighborhoods from potential negative impacts of development, redevelopment, and/or public projects that are inconsistent with the neighborhoods' livability, architectural, or historical character, and reinvestment potential. Such measures could include, but need not be limited to:

- Supportive policy, zoning, and regulatory decisions, including protection against incompatible commercial encroachments into residential neighborhoods
- Review and modification of code provisions to address conflicts of use, scale, and intensity

- 6C. Promote the diversification of new housing stock to meet the needs of all citizens for suitable, affordable housing

## STAFF ANALYSIS

**Need for the Proposed Change:** This area is characterized by a neighborhood oriented mix of uses and it has recently experienced some reinvestment in multi-family housing to support the nearby NCA&T campus. By changing the land use from Low Residential to Mixed Use Residential staff feels that they are supporting a continuation of reinvestment in the area. The Low Residential category does not reflect the true nature of the area and staff felt that it would limit future opportunities for reinvestment. The plan encourages mixed housing types and mixed use. By definition, Mixed Use Residential is "... applied in areas suited to a diverse mix of housing types and densities."

Portions of this area are designated on the Growth Strategy Map as a Reinvestment Corridor and Reinvestment Area. The reinvestment corridor runs along East Market Street and the Reinvestment Area covers the remainder of the area. Reinvestment corridors and areas support the promotion of compatible infill and public and private investment to enhance their economic viability. The change in land use classification to Mixed Use Residential can be seen as public effort to promote opportunities for private investment by broadening the options for compatible local-serving nonresidential uses in this area.

**Effect of the proposed Change on the Need for City Services and Facilities (e.g. roadway level of service, traffic counts, planned road improvements, transit, accidents statistics, and environmental constraints such as; location within a Water Supply Watershed, floodplain, streams):**

### Transportation

This area is situated near a proposed train station and just a few blocks north of a proposed Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) station, both of which support mixed use and higher density land use.

The East Market Street Streetscape project is currently in progress. This project includes elements such as on street parking, landscaping, pedestrian friendly street crossings, decorative street lighting, and medians. There has also been a study conducted for the US29 corridor that has identified the need for interchange and intersection improvements, and also to close some of the ramps along the US 29 corridor for safety and operational reasons. These improvements and ramp closures will be phased over the next five years.

### Environmental

A portion of the area flows into North Buffalo Creek and a portion flows into South Buffalo Creek. The area is not in a water-supply watershed. All stormwater pipes that carry public runoff require an appropriately sized drainage easement. There are no known streams within this area. There is no floodplain within the proposed area.

**Implications, if any, the Amendment may have for Other Parts of the Plan:** In the process of reviewing this case staff field surveyed the area to establish the boundaries of the map amendment. To the north of this area are the railroad tracks and commercial uses along East Market Street, which is classified as Mixed Use Commercial. The area to the east is the remainder of the Eastside Park neighborhood which is already classified as Mixed Use Residential. The area to the south also has a mix of uses but they are more residential in nature with some institutional uses. Washington Street appeared to be a natural southern boundary. The area to the west is currently classified as Mixed use Commercial.

**Unforeseen Circumstances or the Emergence of New Information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3):** As stated earlier, there appears to be some new interest in the area for reinvestment and staff feels that the change to Mixed Use Residential will open up more opportunities for further reinvestment.

## **CONFORMITY WITH OTHER PLANS**

*The following aspects of relevant plans may be applicable in this case:*

### **City Plans:**

Eastside Park Community Revitalization Plan, approved February 1993, Amended February 2004: The goals and objectives of the Eastside Park Community Revitalization Plan include promoting affordable homeownership, safety, and community solidarity and empowerment in the Eastside Park neighborhood, roughly bound by O'Henry Boulevard and Bingham Street to the west and east and Spencer Street and Peachtree Street to the south and north. Homeownership in Eastside Park has increased over the last ten years as vacant lots and dilapidated structures made way for new affordable single family dwellings constructed by local non-profit housing providers. Recent community planning efforts have resulted in a new neighborhood center, increased street lighting, and a plan to upgrade and relocate existing playground equipment. Disposition of the last parcels of land acquired in the implementation of the Revitalization Plan is scheduled for 2005 and, while opportunities for homeownership continue to be a priority, the community has expressed interest in exploring the potential for student housing, a day-treatment center, or attached single-family housing and is aware of the need for smooth transitions between the existing neighborhood, the East Market Street commercial corridor to the north, and the new traditional neighborhood Willow Oaks to the South.

Morningside/Lincoln Grove Redevelopment Plan (also known as Willow Oaks), adopted July 2000: The goals and objectives of the Morningside/Lincoln Grove Redevelopment Plan include removal of structurally substandard buildings; elimination of blighting factors; creation of a mixed-use, mixed-income community through adoption of a Traditional Neighborhood Development district; assistance in the rehabilitation of existing housing units; construction of new homes and apartments; and the upgrade of certain public improvements in an area including and surrounding the Morningside Home public housing project, roughly bound by O'Henry Boulevard and S. English Street to the west and east and McConnell Road and Spencer Street to the south and north. The Willow Oaks traditional neighborhood development is well underway and will incorporate rental and for-sale housing, a community/childcare center, and a neighborhood commercial component. The majority of new construction is expected to be completed mid-2006, but rehab and new construction within the redevelopment area boundaries will continue for some time past that date.

East Market Street Corridor Development Plan, adopted in June, 1998. The goals of the plan are to attract new investment to the corridor to revitalize it as a significant gateway and business district. A secondary goal is to attract sustainable new development in adjacent neighborhoods to help support the corridor's development. The plan calls for a mixture of uses to be developed in the area immediately adjacent to the railroad tracks on the south side. Some reinvestment of this type has already occurred including private student housing and infill duplexes.

#### **ADDITIONAL STAFF COMMENTS**

**HCD:** Adopted neighborhood plans within these areas provide a more detailed set of land use and development recommendations and should be referred to for specific use and design standards. Within this proposed mixed-use residential district, it is critical that developments relate to the context of the surrounding blocks, which primarily include narrow lot residential buildings built close to the street. Reuse of existing buildings should be a priority and where new development is proposed, this development should follow the traditional pattern of the established neighborhood, including setbacks, placement and scale of buildings, building design features, pedestrian amenities, and landscape and site features.

Neighborhood and community planning literature supports long-term sustainability of neighborhoods that include a mix of uses and residential types. This amendment supports and enhances the redevelopment plans for Eastside Park and Willow Oaks.

## STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Based on the information provided in this report, staff supports this change due to factors such as:

- supported by other city plans (i.e., East Market Street, Willow Oaks, Eastside Park);
- a mix of uses and residential types support the long-term sustainability of neighborhoods;
- provision of services within the surrounding neighborhood;
- opens up more opportunities for further reinvestment;
- location near a proposed commuter rail station;
- location near a proposed Bus Rapid Transit Station; and
- reduction of auto trips.

The Planning Department recommends approval of changing the land use classification from Low Residential to Mixed Use Residential for the proposed area.